

Mr. Speaker, at the end of each day, those of us in government must be honest and answer the question, by our policies, who have we helped and who have we hurt?

The priorities of the United States, make a statement about who we are and where we stand. It signals to our citizens and to the world the principles by which our lives are governed.

I urge each of my colleagues to be continually dedicated to the small farmers and ranchers of our great nation by becoming an original co-sponsor of legislation that will soon be introduced to fix the credit and statute of limitations problems.

ENACT H.R. 3411, THE COMMISSION ON AMERICAN MATHEMATICS LEADERSHIP ACT, TO REFORM MATH EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yesterday I introduced a bill, H.R. 3411, establishing the Commission on American Mathematics Leadership to improve the way mathematics is taught in our Nation's schools.

The need for this bill is clear. Just 2 weeks ago the most comprehensive and rigorous international comparison of mathematics education ever undertaken revealed American high school seniors, even our Nation's best students in advanced classes, to be among the world's least prepared. The results of this study, the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, called TIMS, cry out for comprehensive reexamination of our current approach to mathematics education in the United States.

As part of the study, in the spring of 1995, fourth, eighth and twelfth graders from more than 40 countries, including the United States, were tested. Asian countries did not participate. The twelfth grade examination was comprised of four separate parts, testing general mathematics, including fractions and percentages, graphics and algebra, as well as advanced mathematics including calculus, geometry and equations.

In the general knowledge of mathematics, American twelfth graders did better than students in only Cyprus and South Africa. Students in four countries, Italy, Russia, Lithuania and the Czech Republic, performed at the same level as those in the United States. Meanwhile, 14 countries, led by the Netherlands and Sweden, outperformed the United States.

In the category of advanced mathematics, tests given to students who had taken or were taking precalculus, calculus or advanced placement calculus, 11 countries outperformed the United States and no country performed worse.

The study indicates that our Nation's mathematics deficiency lies with the systematic instruction of mathematics and not in the abilities of our students.

This is made clear by the fact that fourth graders do well, while eighth and twelfth graders struggle. In fact, the work of American fourth graders is quite strong in math when compared to similar students in other countries.

Equally upsetting is the fact that American students fared poorly in math even though they expressed more enthusiasm for learning the subjects than their peers in other nations. The results of this review are disappointing and unacceptable.

As the chair of the Subcommittee on Technology of the House Committee on Science with jurisdiction over our Nation's technology and competitiveness policy, I find that there is a direct correlation between the ability of the United States to compete internationally and mathematics skills. The requisite expertise needed for technology jobs, in this ever more technologically advanced world marketplace, runs the spectrum from programming, designing systems, trouble shooting and serving clients, among others. All of these talents are reliant upon the concepts of basic and advanced math.

Without these skills, our Nation's technology work force will soon fall far behind our global competitors, further behind, I should say. Exacerbating the international competitiveness concerns is the technology work force shortage facing our Nation. The Department of Labor projects the doubling of the demands for computer scientists, engineers and systems analysts over the next 10 years, an increase of more than 1 million high-skilled high-wage jobs. Yet today many employers report difficulty in recruiting enough workers with these skills despite aggressive retraining and hiring programs.

There is no time to lose, especially for many young Americans. Students must simply become better educated about basic math and their own economic future. Since 1976, workers with wages in the 50th percentile have lost about 15 percent of their earning power while the lowest tenth have lost 25 percent in real wages.

So as we approach the new millennium students underprepared for the workplace are likely to see their wages decline further.

Mr. Speaker, at the start of this decade our Nation's governors set the goal of making American students first in the world in mathematics. The results of the TIMS study demonstrate how far we have to go to reach that goal. So today I urge my colleagues to join with me to renew that lofty goal. We must use the TIMS study as a wake-up call to revamp the culture of math instruction from top to bottom.

I believe the first step necessary to reverse our Nation's declining math proficiency is enactment of the bill that I introduced, the Commission on American Mathematics Leadership Act.

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The duties of the blue-ribbon commission will be to review the existing

research base on mathematics education leadership, including the status of math education in the United States relative to international competitors, proposed professional development priorities to assure that the teaching of math at all educational levels in the United States is strengthened, and to propose a new direction and new ideas to assure our students are world class achievers in mathematics.

The bill I have introduced is also introduced in the Senate, a companion bill, by my distinguished colleague, Senator FRIST of Tennessee. It has been referred to both the Committee on Science and the Committee on Education and the Workforce. I look forward to working closely with my good friends, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), to enact this important bill.

CONGRESS MUST PASS LEGISLATION REFORMING THE IRS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, today we are 35 days away from April the 15th, a dreaded day for every American taxpayer. As we all struggle through this burdensome time of year, please allow me to share with my colleagues some facts.

The average American family today pays more in taxes than it spends on food, clothing and shelter combined. Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat that. The average working family in America today pays more in taxes than it spends on food, clothing and shelter combined.

The Gettysburg address is only 269 words, the Declaration of Independence is only 1,337 words, and the Holy Bible is only 773,000 words. However, the tax law has grown from 11,400 words in 1913, to 7 million words today. I want to repeat that. The tax law has grown from 11,400 words in 1913 to 7 million words today.

There are at least 480 different tax forms. The easiest form, the 1040 EZ, has 33 pages of instructions, all in fine print. As a result, Americans devote 5.4 billion hours, 5.4 billion hours, to complying with the Tax Code each year, which is more time than it takes to produce every car, truck and van made in the United States. I think that is worthy to be repeated also, Mr. Speaker. Americans devote 5.4 billion hours to complying with the Tax Code each year, which is more time than it takes to produce every car, truck and van made in the United States.

Americans also spend \$200 billion each year on tax lawyers, accountants and other costs associated with tax law compliance. The IRS sends out 8 billion pages of forms and instructions each year, which, if laid end to end, would stretch 28 times around the earth. I want to repeat that. The Internal Revenue Service sends out 8 billion pages

of forms and instructions each year which, if laid end to end, would stretch 28 times around the earth.

The IRS, the Internal Revenue Service, employs 114,000 people. That is twice as many as the CIA and five times more than the FBI.

Unfortunately, I could go on and on with equally horrifying facts. The American tax system is simply out of control. Our families and businesses are facing a burden that is far too high and this Congress must do something to help them.

Last year we provided the first tax relief in 16 years, and that is a good start, but, Mr. Speaker, it is not enough. The American tax burden is much more than the size of the check we write to the Internal Revenue Service each year. It is also the difficulty in cost of complying with a lengthy and complicated Tax Code.

The best thing that we can do to help families and businesses nationwide is to give them a simpler, fairer tax system. This will give families more time to spend together, it will give businesses more time to do their business, and it will allow everyone to keep more of their hard-earned dollars.

I know that a reduced tax burden is appealing to people in my district, the third district of eastern North Carolina. Somehow I imagine that people throughout this Nation think it is a pretty good idea also.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join those of us in this Congress, bipartisan, to reduce the tremendous burden American taxpayers currently face. Bills have been introduced to sunset the Tax Code and to replace it with a fairer and simpler tax system. It is critical that we pass this legislation and start the debate about how exactly to give the taxpayers the relief they deserve. Whether it be a flat tax or a national sales tax, or another modification of the tax system, the American people need this and deserve this.

This debate will separate those of us on both sides of the aisle who are serious about tax reform from those who simply talk about it. Talk is cheap. Actions speak louder than words. Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity in this Congress, the 105th Congress, to bring relief to the American taxpayers and it is something we need to do.

I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation for the sake of the American people. Let us eliminate the Internal Revenue Code and replace it with a fairer and simpler tax system.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND MILITARY READINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HUNTER. While the Speaker is there in the Speaker's chair, I want to thank the gentleman for what he has

done to help bring our military forces at least to the state of readiness they are at today. As a friend on the Committee on National Security, the gentleman has worked long and hard to see to it that we have sufficient airlift to move our forces around the world.

I am here, Mr. Speaker, to speak about national security. We are in this great Chamber, the Chamber where, according to Alexander Hamilton, the people rule, and our first constitutional duty to our people, to our country, is to defend them. And yet, Mr. Speaker, over the last several years, under the leadership, if we can call it that, of the Clinton Administration, we have been abandoning our first duty to the people of the United States in that our military forces are much smaller than they were 6 years ago, and they are not ready, Mr. Speaker, to fight and win two regional conflicts. And that is the standard that we set for our armed forces.

Now 5 years ago when we fought Desert Storm we had 18 army divisions. Today we only have 10. We had 24 fighter air wings. Today we only have 13. The Clinton Administration has cut our air power almost in half. And in those days we had 546 naval ships. Today we only have about 333 ships in the U.S. Navy, so they have cut the Navy by about 40 percent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we in the Congress obviously produce the defense authorization bill, and if we do not produce a bill that is signed by the President this year, that puts enough money in spare parts, ammunition, fuel, training and other aspects of readiness, as well as in modernization, and that means buying new equipment to replace the old equipment, then we are doing a great disservice to every young man and young woman who goes down to a recruiter and signs up to be in the U.S. military.

We have been having hearings around the country. The other day my great colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. DUKE CUNNINGHAM), who has also a seat made in San Diego, and I and a number of other Members, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCHALE), and of course the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. HERB BATEMAN), who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Readiness, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SOLOMON ORTIZ), the gentleman from Guam (Mr. ROBERT UNDERWOOD), and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. JIM HANSEN) all participated in a readiness hearing. We had that hearing on the Constellation, the United States aircraft carrier stationed in San Diego.

The testimony that came back from not only the leadership in the Navy, the people that wear the stars on their shoulders, the admirals, but also the enlisted people, was very disturbing, and I want to give my colleagues some of that testimony today, Mr. Speaker.

First, let us hear from Archie Clemmins, Admiral Archie Clemmins, who is the Commander-in-Chief of the

United States Pacific Fleet. And he said this: After decades of requirement driven operations, we are now asset limited. In the past, decisions to commit forces were guided by requirements. Now we determine the level of peacetime commitment based upon forces available. Instead of meeting all requirements, we must prioritize missions and then assign increasingly scarce resources. This is becoming more difficult as U.S. leadership and interests dictate an increase rather than a decrease in forward deployed naval forces.

And he closed with these words in his statement: The net effect is that we are stretching our forces to the limit. He said further: In the past 4 years, we have reduced our personnel force size by over 22 percent while maintaining recruiting standards and keeping faith with the career force. Although we have been manning our deploying ships at adequate level, we are experiencing manning shortfalls that have grown into readiness concerns.

Now that means, Mr. Speaker, that these 333 ships in a Navy that used to be 546 ships are having to operate at an increased OPTEMPO. That means that they are on deployment more often than they were 5 or 10 or 15 years ago, even during the Cold War. And that means that a young sailor who goes off on a 6-month cruise, or a young marine who goes off on a long deployment to Bosnia, or in days past Somalia or Haiti, now comes home and before he can spend time with his family, he is told that he has to leave again on another deployment; or he has to go with his ship while it is being repaired, given an emergency overhaul at some other port, and he is home just in time, has just enough time basically to hug his family, kiss his wife good-bye and leave.

After a period of time, Mr. Speaker, the American personnel who are serving in the uniform say, that is it, I have had it and I am leaving the service. Even today, and this was testimony throughout our hearings, pilots, who are a very, very critical component of our military forces, are in declining number. It is tougher to retain them. They are leaving and going other places.

Now, there are a lot of reasons given for that. Some of the reasons, theoretically, are monetary reasons. They can fly for airlines. It is a little easier job than being deployed for 6 months at a time on an aircraft carrier. But morale is low. And morale is low partly because of that OPTEMPO, because we have this fleet with decreasing resources.

And this budget that President Clinton has given to us is \$100 billion less than the budget that Ronald Reagan gave to us in the mid-1980s, using real dollars. So it could be dollar driven, but it is also morale driven in the sense that these people are seeing that we do not have the spare parts that we need. And that means that when a petty officer, and this was testified to us, when